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September 19, 2011

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioners:

The Bismarck-Mandan Chamber is a local business association representing 1,200 employers with over 43,000 employees. As an organization, our goal is to promote initiatives and projects that will enhance the business environment and economic base of our community. Today, I am writing in regard to the 11-65 proceeding dealing with AT&T's application to merge with T-Mobile.

As you may be aware, Bismarck-Mandan and North Dakota are one of the few economic bright spots in the nation. Our unemployment rate is hovering around 3%, the housing market remains strong and our state is experiencing a rapid development of energy production. With this growth and development, new and exciting opportunities are coming forth in our state. In addition to our development of domestic energy resources, we are become a stronger competitor in the international marketplace where the speed of communication is essential.

Every day, we see the utilization of technology in our community that is making our state more competitive from a business and consumer perspective. The Bismarck-Mandan Chamber is a strong supporter of competition. We hold forth to those ideals that support a marketplace that provides consumers with the best product possible.

Today, I write to you in support of the proposed AT&T/T-Mobile merger. High-speed mobile broadband is rapidly becoming a necessity to businesses that want to stay current and competitive. It also allows a state with a sparse population like North Dakota to compete worldwide. Specific to this merger is the advanced technology is embodied in AT&T's, 4G LTE wireless network.

AT&T and T-Mobile have made their plans public to greatly extend AT&T's state-of-the-art technology and wireless infrastructure to reach more than 97 percent of the nation post-merger. We would look forward to being part of that expansion and gaining the advantages of high-speed wireless coverage. We hope the Federal Communications Commission approves this merger so that the Bismarck-Mandan area can enhance its position as a part of the digital economy.

Sincerely,

Kelvin L. Hullet, President
Bismarck Mandan Chamber of Commerce

CC:

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn